capped person and A.I.I.M.S. will be requested to allot the booth to the person to whom PCO is sanctioned.

STD Facilities in the Tribal and Rural Areas

3637. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether steps have been taken by Government to provide telephone and STD facilities in the tribal and rural areas in the country; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor and the time by which these facilities would be provided to these areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir. The 8th Plan proposals of the Department provide for provision of telephones practically on demand in rural and tribal areas and also provision of STD facilities to all telephone exchanges by 1-4-97. Accordingly 24.3 lakh lines of Gross Switching Capacity of small and medium type is planned in Rural/Semi Urban areas during the plan period.

(b) The Question does not arise.

Improvement of Telephone Service during the Eighth Five Year Plan

3638. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state what steps are being taken by Government to improve the telephone situation in the country during the eighth five year plan particularly in Uttar Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): To improve the telephone situation in the country including Uttar Pradesh. The 8th Plan of the department of telecommunication envisages:

— Provide telephone practically on demand in rural and tribal areas & waiting period for telephone connections not to exceed two years in other areas.

— Provide phone facility in all Gram Panchayats by 1-4-1995. Some more villages to have LDPTs by 1-4-1997.

— Public Call Offices for every 100 households in urban areas.

— Highway telephones on national highways at 10 Km. distance.

— Replacement of life expired and worn out equipment by electronic equipment.

— Practically all new equipment proposed for induction during the 8th plan period to be of digital type.

— Computerisation of Telecommunication services such as directory enquiry, billing, manual trunk services etc.

— Replacement of all strowger MAX III exchanges by electronic exchanges.

— Provision of Subscriber Trunk Dialling facility to all exchanges.

— To meet the above objectives it is proposed to add 93 lakh lines of net switching capacity in the country Including around 5.30 lakh lines in U.P. during 92-97. This is subject to availability of resources and infrastructure.

Post Offices likely to be opened in Almora District of Uttar Pradesh

3639. MAULANA OBAIDULIAH KHAN AZMI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of post offices likely to be opened in District Almora (U.P.) in the current financial year;

(b) what are the names of places where these post offices are likely to be opened and

(c) whether Government would consider the proposal to open one sub-post office at Basot which will cater to the needs of a large number of residents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) During Annual Plan 1993-94, a target for opening of 93